DOMINANT THEMES IN THE NOVELS OF WILLARD MOTLEY

A THESIS

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PREFACE

The purpose of this study is to investigate the works of the novelist Willard Motley, a Negro writer of recent years, who did not depend on Negro themes, but chose non-Negro themes as his means of expressing his creative talents as a writer of the contemporary American scene. This is an attempt to determine whether Willard Motley has contributed significantly to modern American writing in terms of what it tells us about the quality of American life, white as well as black.

It becomes apparent as one reads Motley's novels that three themes are treated in each novel: the theme of revolt, the theme of conflict between man and the urban environment, and the carpe diem theme. It is my intention to discuss each theme and show how each relates to Motley's central idea namely, that an unwholesome environment corrupts the individual and makes him a victim of circumstances.

I am aware that I am interpreting an author's works, not his mind, and an author may well exercise his right to express ideas with which he does not agree. My main purpose for discussing the themes as they are revealed in each novel is to consider whether Motley, by using them, has become a creative voice of all people.

Willard Motley wrote only four novels before his untimely death, but they are very detailed and contain numerous characters and situations. No attempt shall be made to discuss the works in their entirety. References will be made only to situations and characters that are revelant in my investigation of the dominant themes in Motley's works.

Knock on Any Door was Motley's first published novel and my discussion will attempt to prove that this novel embodies the majority of the characterizations and ideas expressed in Motley's other works. Let No Man Write My Epitaph, a sequel to Knock on Any Door, We Fished All Night, and Let Noon Be Fair will be discussed as parallels to Motley's first novel. The aim of the conclusion will be to evaluate the themes and their functions on the basis of how forcefully the themes are presented and how convincing they are in the novels.

I believe that this study is a worthwhile one for several reasons. First, Motley's novels reflect an interesting view of American Life during the decades of the thirties, forties, and fifties. Secondly, his novels appear to be attempts to analyze cause-and-effect tensions between man and his environment. He attempts to show how forces are at work in American society which operate against all groups of people and stimulate social conflict on many levels between youth and adults, within youth itself, and between capital and labor. There are also forces that encourage corruption

in politics, urban slum environments, and adolescent sex. Thirdly, because Willard Motley was a Negro writer, and critical analysis of his works has been very limited. Perhaps this study can offer additional information about another voice in Black literature. Finally, but not of least importance, I think that the study is worthwhile because it is an attempt to analyze the dominant themes that run through Motley's novels, and to my knowledge, this attempt has not been made previously.

One may find several very interesting articles and critical reviews which discuss one or two of Motley's novels. Among the more interesting are those written by Hugh Gloster, Margaret Hester, Granville Hicks, Phoebe Adams, J. Saunders Redding, Nelson Algren, and Arna Bontemps. Many of these above critics have offered excellent analyses of individual novels that Motley has written, but none has analysed the novels collectively. In a small way my study of the dominant themes in Motley's novels might shed further light on the man, his ideas, and his literary achievement.

I am indebted to my advisor Dr. Richard Barksdale who has given me valuable suggestions. Most of all I am indebted to my family, without whose encouragement, patience, and understanding the completion of this work would not have been possible. To them this thesis is dedicated.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Every literary artist apprehends reality through a specific culture. He should, if he wants to make a significant contribution to the annals of mankind, be exposed to a vast spectrum of human experiences. He must gain a thorough understanding of his fellow man in order to evoke, induce, or sway his readers' thinking. If a person during his lifetime had been a student, football player, migratory laborer, ranch hand, short order cook, dishwasher, Christmas card salesman, coal hiker, baker's helper, waiter, janitor, chauffeur, handyman, window washer, plaster's helper, stock clerk, shipping clerk, animal caretaker, laboratory technician, artist (painted decorative brandy bottles), photographer, radio script writer, Housing Authority interviewer, Office of Civil Defense writer, contributor to magazines, and recipient of a Book of the Month Club Accolade,[1] one could certainly conclude that that person had been exposed to a vast spectrum of experience which would enable him to pursue his literary ambitions.

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[1]Eloise Perry Hazard, "First Novelists of 1947," Saturday Review of Literature, XXXI (February 14, 1948), 8.

Willard Francis Motley (July 14, 1912 - March 4, 1965) in the fifty-two years since his birth in Chicago poured all his experiences with menial jobs and menial people into his novels. His parents, Archibald John and Mary Fredricia, reared him in a lower middle-class, polyglot neighborhood and educated him in the Chicago public schools. While he was still a child, he contributed to the children's pages of various newspapers and magazines. He played football at Englewood High School and established his sports page nickname, "The Little Iron Man." His lasting enthusiasm in sports led him to write dozens of short stories centered around a sports background. His high school achievements almost took him to college, but as he phrased it, "My funds and my one hundred and thirty-five pounds were not enough."[2]

Motley made several cross-country trips which enabled him to gather a variety of experiences. His first transcontinental trip was to New York by bicycle; his second, to California by jalopy. His trip to California resulted in the publication of several articles which appeared in Commonweal and similar magazines. On his third cross-country trip, Motley thumbed rides through several Western States and during this time he served thirty days for vagrancy in Cheyenne, Wyoming.[3] Upon his return to Chicago,

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[2]Stanley Kunitz (ed.), Twentieth Century Authors, First Supplement (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1955), p. 694.

[3]Ibid.

Motley worked for the Federal Writers Project studying living conditions in the Chicago Negro community.[4]

During his twenties, Motley voluntarily moved to a blighted part of Chicago, West Madison Street's Skid Row, to study its inhabitants and to gather material to foster his purpose as a writer.[5] Motley explained:

> As far as writing is concerned I went through several periods starting with trying to write short stories for pulp sports magazines . . . . I even tried writing 'confessions.' Finally, I moved to the slums of Chicago after being bored with the middle-class neighborhood in which I was reared and there discovered myself and the sort of thing I wanted to put on paper.[6]

Motley's first book, Knock on Any Door, was published in 1947. While working on this novel, he lived in a shabby building that had once been a stable. His room contained no stove to fend off the Chicago cold; therefore, he improvised by burning paper in a tin can to warm his hands as he wrote his manuscript. Knock on Any Door represented eight years of actual writing, rewriting, and revising. He sent the completed manuscript off in a tomato crate to a number of publishers who rejected it as being too raw; however, with support from Newberry and Rosenwald Fellowships, he revised it and reduced its enormous bulk to

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[4]Herbert Hill, Soon One Morning: New Writing by American Negroes 1940-1962 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), p. 389.

[5]Nona Balakian and Charles Simmons, The Creative Spirit (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1963), p. 30.

[6]Kunitz, loc. cit.

its publication size. When the Macmillan Company published it, he became a celebrity overnight.[7] Because it was one of the first naturalistic novels to exploit the problems of juvenile delinquency, it enjoyed extraordinary commercial success. As a result, it was made into a Hollywood film starring Humphrey Bogart.

In 1951, Motley completed his second novel, We Fished All Night. In it, he attempted to describe the impact of World War II on three young Chicagoans. In 1960, Motley's sequel to his first novel, Let No Man Write My Epitaph, was published and also made into a movie.

Motley spent the last thirteen years of his life alone in the hills above Mexico City. He died of gangrene of the intestines from a neglected infection in a Mexico City clinic a year before his novel, Let Noon Be Fair, was published.[8]

Motley's novels are peopled with second generation Italians, Jews, Irish, and Poles. One might conjecture that he did not write about the Negro because he felt that he knew the problems of the white community equally well and because he felt that the Negro writer must not lose sight of the basic problems that underlie all human beings.[9]

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[7]Richard Bardolph, The Negro Vanguard (New York: Vintage Books, 1959), pp. 378-79.

[8]Harry Ploski and Roscoe Brown (eds.), The Negro Almanac (New York: Bellwether Publishing Company, Inc., 1967), p. 693.

[9]"People Who Read and Write," New York Times, July 13, 1947, p. 8.

In referring to his own moods of inspiration, Motley once said:

> I like writing late at night . . . . and when the story is coming good I generally work from twelve to fourteen hours a day until I hit a cold spot. Then there are several days when I loaf and wait for the story to take hold of me again. I think that I most enjoy sitting in bars, restaurants, etc. watching people, listening to their conversations and wondering about them, who they are, what their lives are.[10]

Willard Motley's literary success began during the Post World War II Expansion. The period in which he conceived his first complete novel has been classified as the Age of Prose Fiction because fiction was the principle literary form of the decade. The writers during this period told not only about the elementary struggle for life but also about the possible survival of the individual identity. Motley's decision to follow the path of his contemporaries came during a time when American fiction was going through a period of transition. It has become somewhat difficult to establish a beginning point for the fiction of the period because several factors come into focus; one concerns death, the other inception. The "old" giants of American and British fiction such as Steinbeck, Hemingway, Farrell, James Joyce, Dos Passos, and Virginia Woolf had all run the course of their literary talents; therefore, a new beginning was necessary. The inception was a new type of criticism, a period of revolt against protest.[11]

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[10]Kunitz, Loc. cit.

[11]Chester, Eisinger, Fiction of the Forties (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), pp. 1-5.

If we briefly survey the formative years of the postwar generation of Negro novelists, we find that most of the novelists were born between 1911 and 1916 which made them approximately twenty-five or thirty years old at the time of Pearl Harbor. They had also reached adulthood during the depression and were fully aware of what its consequences had been. Therefore, these two crises were reflected in their writings. An index to the temper of the period includes such works as Motley's Knock on Any Door (1947) and We Fished All Night (1951), Ann Petry's The Street (1946) and Country Place (1947), Chester Himes' If He Hollers Let Him Go (1945), Lonely Crusade (1948), and Cast the First Stone (1952), Frank Yerby's The Foxes of Harrow (1946), The Golden Hawk (1947) and The Vixens (1948), Curtis Lucas' Third Ward Newark (1946), William Gardner Smith's Last of the Conquerors (1948) and Anger at Innocence (1948), Zora Neale Hurston's Seraph on the Suwanee (1948), Will Thomas' God is for White Folks (1947), and Willard Savoy's Alien Land (1948). Bone states the impact thusly:

> But if the Depression left its mark on the postwar generation, their wartime experience was no less momentous. After Pearl Harbor the American Negro lived through a period of rapid social change, with dramatic consequences for the racial status quo. In spite of the wartime riots, the social climate of the war years was distinctly favorable to the Negro cause . . . . Government spokesmen, inspired by the manpower shortage and the need for national unity, proclaimed a new era in American race relations. Sensing their tactical advantage, American Negroes demanded and received a fuller share in the national life.

> The war years were only the beginning of a trend which has since culminated in a series of important Supreme Court victories. In response to this trend the postwar novelists were forced to revise their literary goals. If Negroes were at last moving toward full integration, why not point the way by writing 'integrated' novels. Superimposed on the old impulse was a new impulse to expand their range, to transcend the parochial character of Negro experiences.[12]

Because of the circumstances that surrounded the postwar Negro novelist, Bone further suggests that the novelist had one of three directions he could choose if he aspired to achieve literary fame. He could choose the least constructive direction of pulp fiction. This type of literature was regarded solely as a commercial venture because it was serious about nothing and it posed no specific problems concerning race. The second choice was one of assimilation which avoided racial conflict by avoiding Negro life. The third choice was the novel of Negro life which dealth with race material, but not in connection with racial conflict. Literature written by Negroes before the forties had been inextricably linked with the complex racial realities which had surrounded the writer.[13]

As an aspiring young novelist of the forties, Willard Motley chose the assimilationist option. His novels have been categorized as "raceless pretest novels" because they contain impulses toward social protest and toward racelessness.

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[12]Robert A. Bone, "The Revolt Against Protest," The Negro Novel in America (ed. rev.; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), pp. 155-56.

[13]Ibid., p. 166.

In some respects Motley's novels reflect the styles of both Frank Yerby and Richard Wright. His novels are written in the tradition of Frank Yerby to the extent that they are "raceless," and also in the tradition of Richard Wright because (aside from the racial identity of the main characters) they are indistinguishable from the environmentalist or naturalistic novels of the Wright School.[14]

By the time that Motley could have perfected the theme used by the Wright School, the social conditions which evoked them had changed somewhat; the theme had shifted and was not as dominant, but Motley continued to use it in his writing.

According to Orville Prescott the naturalist believed in:

> . . . the worship of the two-faced god, heredity and environment . . . . They believed that men were nearly powerless to overcome the psychological, social and economic forces which conditioned their lives; but they cared about the miserable creatures anyway. So they wanted to change the forces, the environment. Progressive education, slum clearance, collective bargaining and psychoanalysis, these were the world changers summoned at various times to improve the deplorable human environment.[15]

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[14]Ibid, p. 169. Bone noted that American writers such as Dreiser, Farrell, Steinbeck, and Dos Passos had adapted naturalism to fit their needs, but before Wright this tradition was untapped by the Negro novelists. The Wright School used literature as a means of dispelling inner tensions of race. Their style consisted of a brutal realism and the characterization was essentially socialogical. The literature ranged from the two extremes of "pure" racial to "pure" social. On the social extreme, the antagonist was usually the city slum.

[15]Orville Prescott, "The Power of Environment," In My Opinion (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1952), p. 41.

Apparently Willard Motley saw the need to combine both racelessness and social protest in an attempt to stimulate America's conscience. His novels are filled with poverty, sex, drug addiction, alcoholism, incest, crime, juvenile delinquency, riots, the tragedies of war, and corruption in education, religion, and politics in which he cries out for the indictment of the cause. He envisions that America will be destroyed by the same forces that produced its growth unless drastic changes are made. In each of his novels, Motley tries to point up that a negative environment causes a conflict between man and man and man and self. In each novel, man emerges as a helpless inescapable creature of the environment that he has created for himself. Motley's novels embody an indictment of society and its establishments which leaves the reader with a total sense of hopelessness and helplessness. Unless man recognizes what he is doing to himself and others, there will always be Nick Romanos who are permanently warped by their environment.

CHAPTER II

THE THEME OF REVOLT

Adolescence is often a time of "storm and stress" at least partially because so many cultural demands tend to be concentrated within a relatively short period of time. Because no clear pattern of transition from dependence to independence is spelled out for the adolescent by our society, he may experience strong conflicts between the wish to remain secure, dependent, and free of responsibility, and the wish to be free to determine his own destiny.

Breaking family ties is a normal part of growing up and the adolescent who fails to break them prolongs his period of dependency. Under ideal conditions, the ties are gradually weakened with the knowledge and under the guidance of the parents, so that the adolescent develops strength for the complete independence which he must eventually assume. Sometimes, however, there is a violent revolt, perhaps because one or both parents try to prolong parental control or to exercise it in an unreasonable way, or perhaps because of a deep-seated antagonism which is more than just a transitional phase of adolescence. In such cases the problems of revolt are intensified.[16]

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[16]W. Tasker Witham, The Adolescent in the American Novel 1920-1960 (New York: Ungar Publishing Company, 1964), p. 65.

Because Willard Motley recognized the existence of a deep-seated antagonism in many youth, he chose to make the revolt theme a dominant one in his novels. Nick Romano in Knock on Any Door is a classic example. Nick, an Italian-American, is transformed from an altar boy to a killer.

The son of a devout Catholic lower middle class family, Nick is a lovable and sensitive small boy, devoted to his family and church. "He thought about being twelve and going on that day to serve God. It was wonderful."[17] He has dreams of someday becoming a priest. What then causes a revolt in Nick?

A child's home is extremely important in molding his attitude toward life. In the best type of home, an adolescent is allowed to take responsibility for himself as soon as he is able to do so. His parents do not burden him with their own unsolved problems. The child is proud of his home and feels secure in its harmony. By the end of adolescence, the parents in a good home have become friends rather than enemies of their children. If homes are inadequate in any of these respects, an adolescent either fails to overcome his emotional and social childhood, or else he is driven into open revolt.[18] In Nick's case, his parents are unable to keep him free of their own unsolved problems.

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[17]Willard Motley, Knock on Any Door (New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, Inc., 1947), p. 9.

[18]Luella Cole, Psychology of Adolescence (New York: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1948), p. 307.

When Nick's father loses his small business during the depression, the family moves to a slum district. Nostalgic for the lost decencies of early childhood, rebuffed because of incomprehension at home and at school, young Nick becomes confused.

> He didn't like the new school at all. The sisters were mean. They slapped the kids' hands hard with rulers and made the whole class stay after school writing, 'I will try to please God by being quiet in class,' even if only a couple of kids were bad or talked. It got so they had to stay after school two or three days a week filling paper after paper with promises to be good. Then Ma would scold him for being late when he got home . . . .
>
> The kids in seventh grade were all older than he was. Most of them were fourteen or fifteen years old, but he was as big as they were. Some of them came to class in overall pants and ragged sweaters and shirts. They needed haircuts and their clothes were dirty. They were tough. They were always throwing spitballs or shooting bent pins across the room or throwing erasers.[19]

Nick becomes allied to Tony, the roughneck leader in the school. Since Tony misbehaves frequently, Nick often takes the blame for him. Because the social attitudes of Nick's parents are in conflict with Tony's, they insist that Nick cease his association with Tony. Ma and Pa agree, "We want to keep our boy pure for the church. This Tony uses curse words and plays rough tricks."[20] Their overt insistence only makes Nick and Tony inseparable.

> To Nick this relationship took the place of the closeness he had felt to Father O'Neil, the

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[19]Motley, Op. cit., p. 12.

[20]Ibid., p. 16

> comradship he had enjoyed with his brother before they moved, the sympathy Ma had never given him and the understanding Pa had always withheld.[21]

Parents sometimes initiate sibling rivalry by making comparisons. Nick's parents' constant comparisons of Nick with Julian further frustrates Nick's emotional and social development and causes him to revolt. Julian is the good little boy in the family. They are always pointing out how wonderful Julian is and asking Nick why he is not like Julian. When Nick and Vito become friends:

> They had a little black book and sometimes they'd write in it, just for the fun of it. they'd have the names of stores they were going to make and their death list. In it they had written the names of their enemies and the guys they were going to bump off. Julian's was the first name in the book.[22]

As Nick grows older he becomes less secure and more frustrated as his parents try to prolong parental control.

> It was hell, living at home. Like tonight. Ma had been after him for a solid hour about going around with Vito.
> "That kid's no good. No good at all!" Christ, how he hated that!
> "He treats me better than you do!" Nick snapped.
> Ma banged back at him with, "Why don't you get out? Why don't you go over to his house and live? I'll pack your clothes if you want me to."[23]

Again, Nick's parents reject the social attitudes of Nick and his friends. Their notion as to the time when adult protrusion and guidance should be relinquished in favor of

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[21] Ibid., p. 17.

[22] Ibid., p. 122.

[23] Ibid., p. 127.

greater individual responsibility is quite different from Nick's. Again, their overt insistance cause Nick to become more determined to relinquish their control over him. Walking out and slamming the door for emphasis, he remonstrates, "As for me, I'll get mine the easy way. Little Nicky will take care of himself!"[24]

The father's inadequancy in not being able to provide financial security for his family has a direct effect upon Nick. Since Nick has not lived up to his father's expectations, he often bears the brunt of his father's abuse. One evening his father is in a state of intoxication and the following scene ensues.

> Pa walked toward the front of the house. Ma following him, whined, "Pa, it ain't like you to drink. What's the matter with you Pa?" He pushed her away from him, and walked into Nick's and Julian's room . . . . Pa unloosened his belt, yanked it out of the loops around his trousers and held it in his fist, . . . He walked over to the bed and yanked the covers back.
>
> Nick lay on his stomach. He was sleeping in his shorts. Below them were the two white lines of his legs. Above them were his back and shoulders, broad, husky; his arms were doubled under him. He lay relaxed, peaceful . . . .
>
> The belt buckle came down hard, cutting into the flesh of Nick's back, leaving broken skin, bringing a smear of blood. Again the metal and the leather came down as Nick, waking and twisting away from the pain, turned over on his side with his arms and legs drawn in.[25]

After the unmerciful attack, Nick's contempt for his father further encourages his determination to revolt against

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[24] Ibid., p. 128.

[25] Ibid., p. 180.

the established family relations. Even when his father becomes ill and his Aunt Rosa begs him to visit him, Nick answers:

> Aw, he never has a kind word for me. He hates me. I'm going to take in a show. He turned and started for the door. At the door he looked over his shoulder. "I'll be back in a couple of hours, Ma."[26]

When Nick returns a week later his father is dead and buried. The revolt from the family is complete.

Similar situations that lead to Nick's revolt and that result in his becoming a killer are also present in Let No Man Write My Epitaph. Again, the reader witnesses the life of young Nicky, Nick's son by Nellie Watkins, who also experiences a difficult adolescent, adjustment period. Unlike his father though, the result of his revolt is only temporary.

Young Nick is reared by his mother and several vagabonds of West Madison Street. Since his home environment does not contain the established family unit, as in the case of Nick's father, it places additional stress upon normal adolescent emotional and social development. Nellie's feelings of inadequacy in providing security for her child, and her apparent drunkardness and dope addiction, are transferred to her sensitive young son. Nick feels of himself and of Lee, whom he has found comradeship that:

> . . . both were kind of sad, Nick guessed. He knew he was. His mother. But I love her. No, I hate

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[26]Ibid., p. 186.

> her. How can she do this to me? Sometimes thinking about it, thinking about her drinking, his eyes would kind of water-up.[27]

Like Nick, young Nicky is berated by his mother. The older Nick is berated because he does not amount to his mother's expectations while the younger Nick is berated because his mother feels that she is degenerate. She attempts to destroy his personality while hating herself for doing it. During one of her attempts:

> She laughed, loudly, vulgarly; the tragic tone was deep-down and hidden. "Your father was no good! We weren't married. You're illegitimate. You're a bastard!"
> The awful lightning struck. He stood up, his eyes flashing at her. "I hate you!"[28]

At other times, Nick's reluctance to become independent and his loyalty to his mother are the bonds that strengthen him when she scoffs, "I want to live my own life. I don't want you here anymore."[29]

Young Nick's life is further frustrated because Nellie prostitutes to support them and her drug habit. His conscience echoes:

> Nellie got a man.
> She got her fix.
> And another man.
> For money for the rent, Nick's food.[30]

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[27]Willard Motley, Let No Man Write My Epitaph (New York: Random House, 1958), p. 150.

[28]Ibid., p. 306.

[29]Ibid., p. 305.

[30]Ibid., p. 308.

Finally, unable to withstand perpetual conflict and tension, Nick is introduced to marijuana. While wandering the streets and feeling rejected, he meets his old school friend, Lee.

> "I'm going to a party," Lee said.
> "Come on with me."
> "My mother."
> "Alright."
> Nick didn't even notice the people of the house. My mother.
> Lee came over. He had a smoking cigarette in his hand.
> "Here, Nick-take a puff-like this." He showed him how.
> "It ain't habit-forming. I can take you to the library and prove it."
> He pushed the cigarette into Nick's fingers. Nick held the cigarette listlessly . . . . Why not? He brought the cigarette up to his lips. The acrid smoke burned in.
> It took only a few seconds.
> It started from his feet, up his legs, up his back, along his neck, creeping pleasurably, up into his face and his head, the roots of his hair, the very ends of his hair uuuuuuuuuhhhhhhhhh . . .[31]

His mother no longer matters and he has no worldly problems. His addiction grows and becomes worse.

Louie, the older Nick's brother, is a minor character in Let No Man Write My Epitaph. His revolt is caused primarily by the secrecy that shrouds his childhood. Since Louie is unaware of the manner in which his older brother died, the family moves from neighborhood to neighborhood to avoid scandal. Louie, however, senses that:

> There was something strange about his family. He could remember whispering. They were always whispering. Women whispering, whispering. Then

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[31] Ibid., pp. 409-413.

> moving again. Moving to different neighborhoods three or four times . . . .
>
> Ang, Ma, Rosemary, and Aunt Rosa leaning together over a table, in a corner in the kitchen, talking in low tones, hands sometimes up to their mouths, their eyes looking fearfully out of the window onto the empty street. Whispering. You move. You hide.[32]

The family's anxiety that he will mature in the same manner as his older brother, alienates Louie from their affection. They constantly badger him about his appearance and behavior. "Why don't you put a shirt on!" Ang says. "Aw, why don't you drop dead!" Louie answers.[33] There appears to be a definite lack of understanding between the family and the youth. While the family's life has been fearful, Louie's life has been one big laugh and good time. Of the adults, he says:

> Those grownups, yelling, crying about juvenile delinquency, that's a laugh. They don't understand us but we understand ourselves. We ain't any different than they are. We're just imitating them, if they'd take time to think about it.[34]

Either the assumption can be made that if Louie had been a well-developed character, his hostile personality would have emerged above the surface; or Motley attempted to make a deliberate contrast between two brothers, reared in a similar environment, to show the various degrees in which youth can become alienated from the same family.

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[32] Ibid., p. 323.

[33] Ibid., p. 325.

[34] Ibid., p. 331.

In Let Noon Be Fair, the revolt theme involves several people, but the revolts are of different types than those disclosed in Knock on Any Door and its sequel. Perhaps the differences lay in the fact that Motley chooses characters from a different environment and economic level than those of his previous novels.

An adolescent may experience conflict if he finds adults, including his parents, behaving differently from the ways in which they have led him to believe that they act, and the ways in which they have taught him to act. Several characters in Let Noon Be Fair revolt because they oppose their parents' behavior. Pas Beltran's opposition to her father's behavior erupts when she discovers that her father has not lived by the same moral standards that he attempts to instill in her. Senor Beltran has acquired his wealth by cheating the peasant farmers of their land. Pas accidentally discovers her father's base deeds while rummaging through an old trunk for a childhood toy. Several letters, yellow with age, are among the things there. She begins idly to read:

> Honorable Senor Hector Beltran:
> I miscalculated. We will dispossess forty-five Indian families. We will get the land for a fiftieth of its value . . . . We will be buried in silver caskets . . . I justify myself in saying that the ignorant Indian population on this tract of land would not be able to take advantage of the situation. We are not paupering them, really, but putting them back on the land poor as it is, where they wish to be content . . . .[35]

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[35]Willard Motley, Let Noon Be Fair (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1966), pp. 156-57.

These words immediately destroy the image that Pas has of her father. Upon deciding to atone for his sins, Pas announces:

> "I'm going to become a nun. I . . ." and she spoke fiercely now, "I have been kissed and it was delicious. I have been held in a man's arms. I would probably like to get married, experience those things of sex, have children." Her threat was tight, hurt her, but she went on steadily. "But I am going into the church to pay for some of your sins--to pray to God for you."[36]

With Pas' decision, Senor Beltran alienates himself from his daughter by refusing further communication with her.

Yolanda, Tizoc's daughter, revolts because of an emotional conflict in which she can not accept individual responsibility. After bearing an illegitimate child and refusing to keep it, she becomes a prostitute. Her father tries hard not to alienate her from the family by being willing to accept Yolanda on her terms, but she refuses.

Since Yolanda does not live up to her father's expectations, Tizoc places his confidence and expectations in his twin sons. When he tries to force his ideas and material wealth on Faustino and Paco, Paco refuses them. His contempt for his father is revealed when Tizoc decides to buy Paco a car.

> "I'll buy you a car, son," Tizoc said to him. "Save your money, Papa. I know you earned it the hard way." He smiled bitterly. "I don't need a car." "Son, what is mine is for my boys." Shove it, Paco thought.
> "I don't want a car. I don't need a car!" he said. His eyes flooded and in his youthful idealism he hated this man.[37]

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[36] Ibid., p. 158.

[37] Ibid., p. 392.

Paco attempts to relinquish adult control and interference for greater individual responsibility, but his attempt is stifled by his father's own egotistical goals.

Aaron, the young Jewish boy in We Fished All Night, also has severe adjustment problems. His domineering father greatly affects his social and emotional growth. As a young boy, Aaron is interested in becoming a writer, but his father tries to stifle his literary ambitions because he feels that Aaron should become more inclined toward business acumen. His father often berates him when he catches Aaron trying to pursue his literary aspiration.

> "You are doing this-" his father said, scattering the papers on the table with an angry hand. "You're 'writing'." He spoke the last word contemptuously. "And what are you writing? You are writing nonsense!"
>
> With the back of his hand his father smacked the bottle of ink and the quill feather off the table. Aaron saw the ink ooze black into the rug. Hit me but don't destroy my writing, he said to himself, not looking up at his father. His father waved and then crumpled the sheets of paper impatiently in his fist. Aaron was afraid he would cry. "A hulk of a boy like you writing poetry," his father said. He didn't want to cry. It would be something else his father would accuse him about for not being a man.[38]

Aaron is the victim of a home where there is a domineering parent who is consistently hostile, unaffectionate, disapproving, critical and distant. Aaron constantly feels lonely and rejected because of his environment and because his mother has deserted him and his sister while they are very young.

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[38]Willard Motley, We Fished All Night (New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, 1951), pp. 38-34.

When Aaron recommits himself to the veteran's hospital because of his emotional instability, he reveals to the psychiatrist that:

> My father loves my sister. He doesn't love me. When we were little--when my mother went away--he would rock her, he would hold her in his arms, he would sing to her. Never me. I was alone. I've always been alone. Only once my mother held me in her arms and kissed me that I can remember. My father hates me. That's why he sent me to fight, He wants me to get killed. I know it. He does.[39]

Aaron feels that his emotional instability would not have resulted if his father had not ask him to enlist in the army. When he returns from the war, his domineering father insists that he live with them. Aaron tries for a while but his rejection of them forces, "I got a room. I'm going to move. I think it's better if I live by myself." His father's reply, "This you shouldn't do. You shouldn't hurt me like this." is met with an indifferent smile. "I'm going," he says. It was good to hurt someone; he had been so badly hurt himself.[40]

"Rebels without a cause," would you say? Indeed Motley thought not. Because of misunderstanding and the lack of communication with their parents, the young people in Motley's novels experience agonizing tensions and conflicts during their struggles for independence. By depicting various home environments, Motley points out that youth of all ethnic, social and economic groups experience difficulty. In every situation, poor family relationships lead to detressing results.

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[39] Ibid., p. 393.

[40] Ibid., p. 193.

Motley displays a rather pessimistic view that adolescents will not survive conflicts and tensions without open revolt. Each youth is a symbol of innocence until he attempts to overcome parental control. Each dislikes parental guidance, a normal adolescent reaction, but Motley has each exhibit such dislike to the point of intense hatred. With the exceptions of young Nicky and Louie, where there are no father images, each adolescent is more greatly antagonized by the father because he does not live up to his parents' expectations. Also, with the exception of the older Nick, who has absolutely no chance of regeneration, Motley hints that his other characters could have been regenerated if the parents had stood less in judgment of their children's actions. Grant's statement that, "Every human being is dignified, . . . Or should be. Has something of quality . . . ."[41] contains the sociological lesson that parents will have to recognize and respect the individual worth of their children; and in doing so, it will eliminate hostility and create harmony between the youth and the parents.

In addition to experiencing conflicts in the home which negatively influence adolescent growth, the youth in Motley's novels are also negatively influenced by the slum conditions of the big city, the corruption of schools, churches, and politics, and the conflict between capital and labor. We can, therefore, conclude that Motley chose as a second theme in his novels, the effects of the urban environment on the individual.

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[41]Jose Donoso, "From Heaven to Hilton," Saturday Review of Literature, XLIX (March 12, 1966), p. 152.

CHAPTER III

THE CITY VERSUS THE INDIVIDUAL

Willard Motley's theme that an unwholesome environment corrupts youth and makes criminals of them is basically naturalistic. It is based on the belief that certain ethnic minorities are inescapably victimized by urban politics and that the individual is defeated by the world and made a jest of by the society in which he lives. Motley's concern for the problem urged him to make pleas for the alleviation of human misery caused by unwholesome conditions. His most forceful plea appears near the end of Nick's trial during Morton's argument to the jury to preserve Nick's life. Morton indicts society when he states:

> We-Society-have done this . . . .
> Who is Society? What is Society?
> . . . . . .
> Society is you and I and all of us. We-Society-are hard and weak and stupid and selfish. We are full of brutality and hate. We reproach the victims of our own making and whether they are innocent or not once we bring them before the court, the law, Society-once we 'try' them, we 'try' them without sympathy, without understanding! . . . And -we- cut- down- any- we choose! . . .
>
> Then, standing erect-looking straight into the jury box- Morton said, "Nick Romano was murdered seven years ago! I so charge! I accuse-Society! Of the murder of Nick Romano! And I tell you, too, to leave without illusions . . . ." He went on slowly. "Society . . . you and I . . . all of us . . . we . . . the 'good' people! murdered-Nick Romano! Why is he here before us? We ordered him here! We

> brutalized and murdered him and we made this rendezvous with him seven years ago . . ."
>
> And now he said, very emphatically, very slowly, "Nick Romano is any boy anywhere in the world conditioned and influenced as he has been conditioned and influenced. He is your son or brother or mine. We are, all of us, the result of everything that has happened to us and that surrounds us. As Clarence Darrow said, "Before any progress can be made in dealing with crime the world must fully realize that crime is only a part of conduct, that each act, criminal or otherwise, follows a cause. That given the same conditions the same results would follow forever and ever . . . anyone can reason from cause to effect and know that the crimes of children are really the crimes of the State and Society, which by neglect and active participation have made the individual who he is . . .'[42]

Motley apparently believed that people of any age above infancy are to some extent affected by the standards and the customs of the community in which they live. Society, by providing an unwholesome environment, corrupts youth and is, therefore, responsible for the crimes they commit. Motley documents his thesis by allowing his hero to die in the electric chair as a result of the overpowering influence of a slum environment. Society, by sending Nick to the electric chair, imposes the extreme penalty for its own preservation of law and order.

Both psychological motives and physical environment contribute to Nick's degeneration. An analysis reveals that many physical influences turn the "altar boy" into the "killer."

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[42]Motley, Knock on Any Door, pp. 442, 452. Motley allowed Morton to quote from Clarence Darrow, U. S. lawyer and social reformer. He was famous as a defense attorney in the Scopes trial as well as a defense attorney in labor and criminal trials. Darrow was trial attorney in about fifty murder cases, and not one of his clients suffered capital punishment. "Darrow, Clarence," New Standard Encyclopedia, Vol. IV. (Standard Educational Society, Inc., Chicago, 1964), D-37.

With the Romanos' misfortunes, Nick is introduced to the slum environment, and the first set of degenerating influences begin to take place. A lengthy, but clear picture of the first slum area in which Nick's family moves gives the reader insight into Nick's frustrations.

> They moved over to West Denver near Lincoln Park and Ma couldn't tell any of her friends where they were moving because that neighborhood had a bad name all over the city and Pa wouldn't stand for her telling anyone. That was where they had gangsters and holdups and killings. Everybody said that it was the worse part of Denver.
>
> They lived on Rio Street. There were four frame houses huddled close together. Only four, and their house was the worse one. The four dark rooms were bare and sullen and dingy from having been lived in by other poor people who had been unable to buy paint or wallpaper to make them look any other way. Out beyond the gate Rio Street was only a dirt road one block long, worn lumpy and gray by automobile tires, fronted by the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad tracks swollen to eight sets of rails here. From the front porch looking across the tracks Nick could see the rear ends of a paint factory and a foundry. The weeds grew waist high against the abandoned foundry and its windows were broken, with here and there a shattered pane standing stark, with blackness behind the broken windows.[43]

Motley indicts the result that experience had on an impressionable young boy who had been accustomed to middle-class living conditions, but was now faced with the problem of adjusting to a different environment. Society imposes deplorable living conditions and the Romanos are inescapably victimized by them.

Even when Nick returns from reform school and his family has moved to Chicago, the physical environment is still impoverishing. As he espies his new home:

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[43] Ibid., p. 11.

> . . . the taxi pulled up in front of an ugly, straight-faced building, brick, with the front peeling away in crumbling, weathered leaves of red paint.
>
> Aunt Rosa's apartment was stuck up on the second floor over a grocery store. There was just a front room, kitchen and bedroom . . . .
>
> When it was time to go to bed Ma, Ang, and Aunt Rosa fitted, somehow, in the bed, Junior was in the clothes basket by the bed. Pa slept on the sofa. Julian and Nick slept on blankets on the floor.[44]

When Nick's curiosity leads him to S. Halsted Street, he is unaware that danger awaits the person who dares travel its route. Here marks the beginning of a road of crime that leads Nick to the electric chair.

> Nick walked on, looking at everything. There were Italian stores crowded together . . . . At the corner of 12th Street taxi drivers stood in groups, smoking and talking. The streets were crowded with people. All kinds of people. Negroes in flashy clothes--high-waisted pants,--wide-brimmed hats, loud shirts. Women dragging kids by the hand. Young Mexican fellows with black hair and blue sports shirts worn outside their pants and open at the neck. Kids, lots of kids. Two gypsy women passed Nick. They wore several different colored skirts . . . and their dresses were so low in front that if they stooped over you could have seen their belly buttons. There were beggars with sad eyes, with mouth organs, with hands held out. A blind man's cane tapped the sidewalk. Dress shops, hat shops, Men's clothing stores were crowded together along Halsted, hiding the slum streets behind them. Hiding the synagogues, the Greek church, the Negro storefront churches, the taverns, the maternity center, the public bath.[45]

Nick is fascinated by the new neighborhood because it is plenty tough and a motley crowd of depraved people admires him. At first, he confines his activities to the young juvenile

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[44] Ibid., pp. 80-81.

[45] Ibid., p. 83.

delinquents, but later his new circle of friends expands to gamblers, jackrollers, panhandlers, petty crooks, homosexuals, and prostitutes. Nick especially enjoys going to the movies, because there he sees all the tough characters and hears all sorts of stories about murders, robberies, rapes, crooked cops, and good paying rackets. He learns the ways of the criminal rapidly, turns professional with gusto, and becomes a pawn in the hands of a malevolent society.

Nick makes his decision to enter the world of crime voluntarily after he has been influenced by society's agencies. In so doing, Nick is determined in his course of development by the street. Society betrays him by not offering him conditions which will permit him to develop into a priest, the embodiment of good and his childish ambitions. Nick is gradually pushed into the depths of degradation by forces which he can neither resist or control. Motley uses the naturalist idea that circumstances without God and without successful educative forces victimize the individual. His contention is that if you remove the conditions, you remove the criminal.[46]

Prior to going to Chicago, Nick had served a reform school sentence that made him receptive to damaging environmental influence on his young life. That institution did not reform as Superintendent Fuller had vowed.

> Well here you are. The law say you stay here until you're reformed. Oh, yes. You'll be reformed when you get out of here. Oh, yes.[47]

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[46]Carl M. Hughes, The Negro Novelist (New York: The Citidel Press, 1953), pp. 184-85.

[47]Motley, Knock on Any Door, p. 29.

Instead it warped him. Later, when Nick witnessed Tommy's beating, he was certain that he would not be reformed in that place.

> Fuller said, "Pull them down."
> Tommy's small hands worked clumsily with his belt. The pants fell down to his shoetops . . . .
> Fuller said, "Grab your ankles." . . .
> Tommy grabbed his ankles. The skin tightened out across his behind.
> Fuller stood over Tommy. The light hit the top of head . . . . Fuller raised the strap. Nick saw the muscles coil into a knot in that one arm. Goose-pimples gathered on the surface of Nick's skin and he sucked his lips back in between his teeth. The whip poised above Tommy's bare buttocks like a snake about to strike. It fell back over Fuller's wrist, over Fuller's back. It was black against the white cloth of his shirt. Nick saw Fuller's muscle curl in his arm and then spring out as the strap came down.[48]

The brutal treatment by the authorities in the reformatory makes Nick hate life. Rocky is right when he says "Whatever you've done, when you come here, you're almost an angel. They make worse crooks out of you."[49] Nick makes his decision to be forever against the law when he remarks to Rocky, "You know what--I ain't going straight when I get out of here."[50] According to Motley, reform school facilitates the process of Nick's deterioration.

> You don't go to reform school without seeing and learning a lot of things. And each afront to one of the inmates is an afront to you. You suffer with them. Their wrongs become your wrongs; their resentment is your resentment. No boy gets beaten without your feeling the lash of the whip

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[48]Ibid., p. 48.

[49]Ibid., p. 51.

[50]Ibid., p. 66.

> in your skin. It reaches out until you're not alone. You're all together. You're one.[51]

Part of the city environment that corrupts and victimize is the policeman. Motley consistently depicts policemen as mean, corrupt, cruel, and immoral. Nick, as he blossoms into a hardened criminal, encounters the police many times. During one of his encounters, he is beaten and left lying unconscious on the floor. No wonder, Nick, in a state of mental confusion, can not ascertain his proper course. Those institutions that are theoretically designed to mold character and to develop upright citizens are the very institutions that warp him.

The jury's verdict during Nick's trial represents society's indictment of Nick for his crime. After the trial scene,

> The spectators walked out.
> The courtroom was darkened.
> Society walked majestically, slow-step, firmly, unswervingly, direct as an arrow, had avenged itself. A life for a life.[52]

The moral point is a paradox, Society must assume the responsibility for the crime perpetrated by Nick; yet the same society must take Nick's life in order to protect itself.[53]

Motley makes certain that he is clearly understood by allowing Grant to testify in behalf of Nick:

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[51] Ibid., p. 72.

[52] Ibid., p. 469.

[53] Hughes, Op. cit., p. 178

> Grant pulled his tie loose a little bit and said, "I am interested because I have seen a boy who lived in squalor and misery sent to reform school for a crime he didn't commit . . . . I have seen him during the formative years of his life driven from home by a father who did not understand him, onto the slum streets of the city, where he found companionship and sympathy and understanding . . . . I have seen him charged with murder . . . and my belief in the brotherhood of man forces me to do everything in my power to save the life of a boy who is--I believe--the victim of his environment.[54]

In other words, Nick is the victim of an environment which does not provide for him either the opportunity or the agency whereby he can realize his potential as a person. Nick's values are destroyed by the same agencies that society maintain, for the protection of the individual. Parental neglect, police brutality, slum conditions and poverty, the failure of the schools and the churches to provide constructive leadership and guidance force his degeneration just as they will later force the degeneration of his son.

At an earlier age than his father, young Nicky is exposed to the seamy side of life. Shortly after young Nicky is born, Nellie begins frequenting the West Madison Street taverns again.

> She took Nick with her. On the tavern floor he learned to crawl; across its cigarette-butt strewn surface, he took his first steps. And he was loved by all of them. Drunkard. Bum. Prostitute.[55]

As young Nicky follows his mother along Chicago's West Side, he is confronted with the signs and smells of the taverns and

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[54]Motley, Knock on Any Door, p. 419.

[55]_____, Let No Man Write My Epitaph, p. 44.

the cheap hotels. West Madison Street neons blink:

BEER ROOMS

GOLDMAN'S
Since 1904

WINES

LIQUORS

ROOMS 20¢ MONARCH BEER[56]

As a result, Nick as a youngster is exposed to every joint, crib, dive, and all social types.

Judge Sullivan, Phil, Max, and Norman try to offer Nicky opportunities that they have missed. What can such outcast failures as a drunken scholar, a jackroller, a panhandler, and a homosexual offer but an unwholesome environment to a sensitive child? During visits to Judge Sullivan's room, Nicky passes drunks, tramps, panhandlers, and a twenty five-cents-a-night hotel; and after he arrives, Nick is crowded into a small room up against dusty chicken wire.

Nellie becomes fed up with the deplorable living conditions that surround her son. Therefore, she decides, "I'm not going to bring my kid--my child--up in this neighborhood. I'm not going to raise him here, that's all."[57] But, the condition of the apartment that she finds is only a little better than her previous home.

> It was really a two-room apartment on the first floor of an old red-brick building. Steps ran up between black iron railings to an uncovered

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[56]Ibid., p. 59.

[57]Ibid., p. 78.

> porch. A bay window . . . looked out upon a small and lumpy front yard where a few scattered hands of stubborn grass fought up through the scaly ground. Empty beer cans had been thrown here by passing drunks.
>
> Inside the front room there was a bed, a dresser, a gas plate, some dishes in a rack over it and, by the window, a kitchen table covered with oilcloth, three chairs drawn up to it. In a corner was a washstand.[58]

Even in his new surroundings the shadow of doom hangs over Nick. He is exposed to the dope addicts of Chicago's West Side because there are so many of them. He could have done just as Juan had done.

> Juan turned into the Crystal Bar . . . . He began counting. He counted six dope friends in there. Six, I know of. In this little dump of a place.[59]

There are scores of minor figures - maimed, distorted, grotesque, and hopeless. The neighborhood lends itself to dope addiction, and it all starts innocently enough. Day by day one or another of them becomes "hooked." Everyone goes from smoking reefers to "popping" goof balls and then, when there is no more excitement, they turn to stronger drugs. Thus, youngsters become victims of their environment and can no longer control their destinies.

Motley's commentary on the subject echoes the indictment found in his first novel. According to this novelist, man's environment has warped him to the point where:

> Fear will lead anyone anywhere.
> That sickness coming on:
> Criminal in behavior but merely self-

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[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid., p. 125.

> preservative in intent, when they don't have it, don't have the money for it, they go steal to get the money.
>
> Got to have it!
>
> The living death. Only by having it are they able to go on.
>
> And yet Society sees them criminal.
>
> Society puts them behind bars.
>
> There is no cure in punishment.
>
> Society never sees itself as criminal and so, in punishing and not curing, Society daily weakens itself. Becomes as diseased as those it punishes.[60]

It was because of his compassion for the unfortunate victims who were doomed to an untimely destruction that Motley wanted their conditions improved and the corrupting influences eradicated.

Could young Nicky have been so different from the others? Had not he, too, been affected by the standards and customs of the community in which he lived? Was not he also a victim of his environment and therefore, not in control of his destiny? Could he have remained "the symbol of innocence of youth in this horrible, horrible environment?"[61] No, Nick becomes trapped in the traffic of Chicago's West Side. He falls in with the crowd out of loneliness, confusion and everchanging feeling of love, hate, and pity for his mother, the knowledge that he is illegitimate, and the idea that he is no good and can never do or be anything. "After all look who he was."[62] Nick has become a victim of a world he never made. Human happiness is largely a matter of chance and he has lost.

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[60] Ibid., pp. 165-66.

[61] Ibid., p. 189.

[62] Ibid., p. 418.

Even in We Fished All Night, Motley appears to have attributed his hero's actions to the miserable and poverty stricken childhood of the hero. The novel moves against a background of machine politics in which its hero, Don Lockwood, becomes corrupt. His unnatural and driving ambition to be someone and to get out of his slum environment reveals how society has warped his thinking. The main culprits, slums and poverty, force Don to suffer an inferiority complex. His humble beginnings parallel those of the heroes in Motley's other novels.

> . . . the two room apartment. Two windows almost the height of the room looked out on Grand Avenue. There were no curtains. None were needed. The panes were so grimed by the weather, so pockmarked with grit, so seldom washed, that it was difficult to see out of them. The room was large. Once, many years ago, the wallpaper had been painted over, and once again. It was neither dark-green, nor brown, nor purple, nor maroon, but a muddy combination of all these colors. The bare plaster ceiling was cracked in many places and in one large, jagged spot over the bed there was no plaster, only the bare laths, grinning at the floor. The floor was bare, dirty, warped. In a corner one of the little kids had messed but no one had seen it. There was a sink piled with dirty, cracked dishes, an old fashioned round table cluttered also with dirty dishes and a few pots containing dried food in their bottoms, a coal stove for both heating and cooking purposes. The only other furnishings were a few rickety chairs, a broken-down davenport against one wall, a bed against another wall and Grandpa's cat against a third wall. Nine people slept in this one room.[63]

Such an impovished environment so warps Don's attitude that he quits various menial jobs because he is afraid that some of

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[63]Motley, We Fished All Night, pp. 12-13.

his "friends" will see him. He justifies his unemployment by saying that "the work was beneath him anyway."[64]

Don's desire for money and power urges him to become a part of the political power structure. He discovers that those who cooperate with the hierarchy are rewarded and those who do not suffer. On the eve of election day:

> The Democrats destroyed Republican literature and put their own in its place, the Progressive Party destroyed Democratic literature and put their own in its place. Whoever got there second and third left only his own candidates' pictures and promises. It was like a card game. You play your card and I'll play mine.[65]

And on election day:

> "Well, John," Buckley says,"I'll give you twenty-five votes to protect yourself."
>
> He gives them to Majewsky and says, "Do what you want with them."
>
> Majewsky is greedy. He starts erasing the Democratic Xs' and starts writing in Republican Xs' . . ."[66]

Don views a rather corrupt democratic process of government. This is how the city, state, and federal governments rule. This is how the fate of the poor, the slum dweller, the middle-class, the young and the old is decided. This is the way the democratic process decides national and international policy. The more involved one becomes in politics, the bigger and more corrupt is the game. Don does not want to go back to the slums and he miserable again. He chooses to escape at any price.

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[64]Ibid., p. 19.

[65]Ibid., p. 432.

[66]Ibid., p. 442.

Along with Motley's indictment of the democratic process comes his indictment of the corrupt police force.

> He [The Power] swung around to the police captain. "By the way, some very nice fellows are running the Blinking Owl. Good friends of mine." He paused. "So ____" he shrugged, "they prostitute out of the joint. So ____" The Power shrugged again, "a few faries cruise in there. So ____" another shrug," "there's a little marijuana around the place. Wellllll--after all--" Another shrug. It's North Clark Street. The power smiled. And The Power added, "The place will go along with you and the organization one hundred per cent."
>
> "Okay, Tom," the police captain said.[67]

Apparently the police and the politicans were established to sell to businessmen the privilege of violating the law. It had almost become an American tradition that law had deteriorated to nothing more than a fix. Again the individual was destroyed by the same agencies that society maintained for his protection.

Motley again uses the familiar "council of despair"[68] as his subject matter in Let Noon Be Fair. The novel centers on the effects of the worst of grim-cracked America upon the socially ambitious middle-class Mexicans and laments the death of an idyllic village to a decadent tourist trap.[69] The initial village environment is not impoverished but prosperous and beautiful. The inhabitants and the newcomers busy themselves mostly with making money until corrupting influences

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[67]Ibid., p. 366.

[68]James Gray, "Counsel of Despair," Saturday Review of Literature, XXXIV (December 8, 1951), p. 20.

[69]Alexander Coleman, "All the Farther for Being Near," New York Times (February 27, 1966), p. 42.

begin to victimize them. Then, decency among them does not prevail very long.

Motley gives a factitious account of the mythical town of Las Casas, an idyllic Eden where no poverty exists and everyone depends on the land and the sea for survival.

> Having all the attributes of Eden, the town as protagonist follows the Bibical script by becoming the setting for a catalysmic fall from grace, the serpent taking the form of Americans, dollars, the sad world of the tourists.[70]

In Motley's expose of corruption, the Mexicans are the innocents and the Americans are the corrupters. At first, the newcomers are welcomed to the village because they bring prosperity and opportunity with them. However, the character of the town change when it is invaded by pleasure seekers with their corrupting morals and dollars. As the environmental conditions change, the ideas and values of the townspeople change. A few of the townspeople foresee what the future will bring, and they lament: "Yes progress is catching up with us" Tom said. "Too bad. The town isn't going to be the same."[71]

> "Times change. We change." He took sand in his hand and threw it away. "The only change I do not like is the change that is coming to Las Casas. Soon we will not know it."[72]

To make his theme convincing, Motley creates a catalogue of outrageously sterotyped characters. Father Campos represents corruption in the church.

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[70] Ibid.

[71] Motley, Let Noon Be Fair, p. 164.

[72] Ibid., p. 192.

> . . . Father Campos continued to entertain his friends from church funds. They sat around his table whenever they wanted. They ate and drank. They flattered him. He had many bottles. If he lived off the people, why then couldn't they take from the church a little?
>
> . . . when they were gone, Father Campos changed into ordinary clothes and went to Maria.[73]

Maria represents the lasciviousness of Las Casas. She is the gay young prostitute whose reputation becomes so popular that:

> . . . word had gotten out if you hadn't been to Maria's you hadn't been to Las Casas and the first question these days that most males were asking each other was "Where is Maria's?"[74]

Dr. Ortega represents the decent people of Las Casas who are negatively influenced by their surroundings. As the moral climate changes:

> Dr. Ortega took an occasional abortion . . . . Then more.
>
> Occasionally he made out prescriptions for heroin and morphine for a few wealthy American residents, but only when he felt that they absolutely had to have it to carry on.[75]

Along with Las Casas's prosperity comes poverty. The standard of living changes; therefore, the village poor are forced to live in small thatched huts along the polluted river bank and eke out a living the best way that they can. Those who can not provide for themselves turn to stealing, panhandling, and other illegal devices. The poor become the victims of the more affluent segment of society, and there is no escape for them. For these poor sufferers, the sentiment

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[73] Ibid., pp. 74-75.

[74] Ibid., p. 228.

[75] Ibid., p. 388.

is "I'd rather the gringos [Americans] didn't come here."[76]

Motley has been accused of distortion to fit the rule. Actually people with a very undesirable environment have overcome depressing effects and have attained stature of importance in communities as responsible citizens.[77] Motley contradicts himself when he portrays Julian as the opposite of his brother, Nick. Both are exposed to the same environmental frustrations, but Julian survives the strain.

> . . . the crux of the matter rests in the enigma man himself, for men from the best regulated homes in the world become criminals.[78]

and - men from the worst environmental conditions become responsible citizens.

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[76]Ibid., p. 113.

[77]Charles Lee, "Disciple of Dreiser," New York Times (May 4, 1947), 3.

[78]Ibid., p. 247.

CHAPTER IV

THE CARPE DIEM THEME

A third prevalent theme in Motley's novels and one which further indicts society's warping influence upon the individual is the carpe diem theme. Motley has Nick and his counterparts adopt the attitude that they must enjoy themselves while they have the opportunity. Each character feels that he must seize the present and trust tomorrow as little as possible.

The attitudes which a child develops in his early relations with his family and friends have either a facilitating or damaging effect upon the child's chances of reaching adequate adolescent and adulthood social adjustment. Adolescent stresses may not merely arise from the family situation, but if the child has grown up with a fanciful picture of society, then his exposure to the actual life of the outer world may be devastating. What outcome is to be expected when the child discovers that he has been disillusioned, and that the world is impaired by family discord, infidelity, and crime; when his vision of government as the protector of the social order is displaced by the picture of political chicane and graft and other aspects of machine administration; or when business is disclosed as a hard and ungenerous struggle for the defeat of

others? Because such revelations may be a profoundly disillusioning experience for an adolescent, he may be forced to choose some way to combat his disillusionment. He may repudiate his previous beliefs and ideals, scorn the church and all official religions, become hard-boiled and cynical,and decide to play the adult game like others.[79]

Personalities are the result of many complex interacting forces and one's development is bound to be affected, for good or ill, by his genetic inheritance; by his physical and psychological environment; by the attitudes and behavior of his parents, peers, and other adults; by the "alarums and excursions" of his own particular era in history; and by his culture and subculture-economic, religious, or social.[80] If the institutions that are established to develop acceptable personalities are unsuccessful, they produce warped personalities.

Nick's personality is greatly affected by the unwholesome environment that surrounds him. Because of his disillusionment, he becomes the hard-boiled, cynical, and cocky youth who ventures into the adult world too soon. Nick's disillusionment is characterized by his repeated statement, "Live fast, die young and have a good looking corpse."[81] Nick may be conscious of the negative influences of the reform school, of his unpleasant home life, of the brutality of the police force, and of his own fate. If so, he is aware of the extent of society's warping influence on his personality.

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[79]Paul Mussen and John Conger, Child Development and Personality (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), pp. 234-36.

[80]Ibid., p. 541.

[81]Motley, Knock on Any Door, p. 157.

As a lad, Nick is conspicuous for his physical appearance and for his knowledge of the "ways of the world."

> Then he was sixteen.
>
> He stood in front of the mirror, combing his hair. He stood, in love with himself, looking in the mirror at himself. His hands halted; the comb rested halfdrawn through the curling dark hair. Sixteen! He looked like he was eighteen or nineteen. He was grown up. He was a wise guy now. He had all the answers. He knew all the goddamn answers. Yeah, he knew about whores and pimps and phoneys and crooked cops and gambling joints and playing the horses. He turned his face, slowly, first to one side then the other, looking at it out of the corners of his eyes, studying his profile. Let anybody try to kid him or make a sucker out of him. He'd show the bastards! He looked up into his eyes. He widened them, made them boyish and innocent. He grinned and winked at himself. Whistling, he got His hat, put it on, tilted it over his forehead a little and posed in front of the mirror. He pushed it to the back of his head and posed again.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> He took one parting look at himself in the mirror and swaggered out of the room.[82]

Nick's cockiness is a defense mechanism against society's warped institutions. He thinks that his perception of the adult world and his halo of curls will assist him in living an unrestrained life. He knows all the answers and all the tricks. How can he be outsmarted?

Nick is so profoundly disillusioned that he unconsciously finds himself repeating:

> Live fast, die young and have a good-looking corpse!" he said with a toss of his head. That was something he had picked up somewhere and he'd say it all the time now. Always with a cocky toss of his head.[83]

He even repeats it when he advises others:

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[82] Ibid., p. 155.

[83] Ibid., p. 157.

> He said to the unhappy man, "The world ain't that sad." He said, "Take it easy. Loosen up. "He said, "Live fast, . . ."[84]

or when he feels rejected by his family:

> You're no good, Nick. You're just like the rest of them down here. Christ . . . .
> . . . Drinking kills everything . . . .
> Get drunk . . . . Pick up a broad.
> . . . . Get drunk . . . . Yeah . . . .
> Live fast, die young and have a good-looking corpse![85]

Hidden in the statement is what appears to be Nick's philosophy:

> Take what you want. Don't let nothing stand in your way!
> . . . . . .
> Plenty of money. Easy money. A good time. Yeah, that's right. Lots of money and lots of good times.[86]

But Nick's conscience tells him that life is not one big game of easy money, intoxication, and a variety of sexual experiences; these do not offer a fulfilling or rewarding life.

Nick's frustrations lead him to become a reckless and irresponsible young man. His activities include delivering drugs, bribes, and rackets. He makes enough money at them to drink and gamble as much as he wants, but he is not satisfied. Restlessness sends him around the street jackrolling, fighting, and getting into drunken brawls. Each activity heightens his frustrations and makes him more determined to "live fast, die young and have a good-looking corpse."

Nick's cockiness protects him against his own anxieties during his trial and during his stay on death row. He refuses

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[84] Ibid.

[85] Ibid., p. 202

[86] Ibid., p. 314.

to renounce his pretenses even when the jury's verdict is given. His defiant and cocky statement, "Well the show's over!"[87] is scornfully shouted to give the impression, as Nick states it, "I'll die like I lived, see."[88] Contrary to what he feels, Nick still has to pretend.

Even Nick's last meal is an agonizing one for him because there is no escape from his tormented conscience.

> He remembered that condemned men never had appetites. Looking at the food he thought the eyes of all the men were on him. Show them you're Nick Romano! Show them you can take it! He forced the food down. Mouthful by mouthful. It caught in his throat and he swallowed it down, took another mouthful. Felt dizzy and sick, but went on, calmly lifting the fork to his mouth. And he swallowed to force the food down. Then when he had eaten what he would ordinarily have eaten he walked to the front of the bull pen and sat down. He ran his fingers through his hair. "Johnson, take some chicken if you want." He combed his hair. "You guys will have to cut the pie mighty thin to all get a piece."
>
> . . . . . .
>
> When they were all grouped around it, Nick walked back to the toilet and was sick.[89]

Further determined to enact his hard-boiled and cynical role, Nick and a guard play a game of cards just a few hours before Nick's execution.

> "Hey, Romano," one of the guards said, unable to sit any longer, watching every twitch of an eyelid, every shudder of a muscle, "You want to play some cards?"
> "No! No'. My God, no!"
> "Sure! Nick said, grinning and walking over.
> They shuffled the cards.
> "Tonight I"m going to burn!

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[87] Ibid., p. 469.

[88] Ibid., p. 474.

[89] Ibid., p. 487.

> Christ! This fellow sure can take it.
> They dealt the cards out.
> "I can't play for money. I'm broke - unless you'll trust me to pay you tomorrow," Nick wisecracked.[90]

Knowledge of his frustrations and intensity of feeling give Nick a passionate desire for life, yet he pursues a path of self-destruction. The staggering list of failures that he has to live with makes it impossible for him to find solutions to the problems of daily living. In the end Nick is a youth strangled by life.[91]

Don Lockwood tries to hide his insecurity in the same manner as Nick does. Don's tragedy, however, lies in his inability to accept himself as he is. Instead of facing reality, he turns to liquor and sex to erase his personal problems. By adopting a care-free attitude toward life, Don tries to forget his inadequacy and pursues his personal ambitions without regard for others. However, Don's sensitivity forces him to realize that:

> He had been drinking too much in the last few weeks . . . . Too much, but he needed it badly. It helped him. It numbed the gnawing despair and loneliness that were at the center of him - when he thought of his life - the rest of it - of himself. Too much drinking. But the lonely, torturing cravings and despondency. The dependent needs. Liquor eased them, relaxed them into the far corners of his mind. And alone he had a different attitude about his leg. Not the laughing, casual pretenses he had assumed in front of people. Nobody knew the despair that faced him every day when he awoke and

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[90] Ibid., p. 490.

[91] Hughes, Op. cit., p. 190.

> and every night when he unstrapped his leg and pulled the covers over him and tried to sleep.
>
> He sat smoking and drinking, drinking and smoking, one after the other. Just to forget. But it was impossible to forget.[92]

Don's tortured mind is contradictory to his outward appearance. He dons a decptive facade when he becomes interested in politics. As a prelude to his political career:

> He bought a gray Homburg for his hair cut and tilted it over one ear. He bought a cigar and fitted it into the side of his mouth.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> He felt in the dark corner of the closet and his hand closed on it. He drew out the gnarled walking stick with its gnarl-carved handle.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The next day, drawing his meager savings from the bank he bought a diamond ring at a hockshop.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> In his room with his cane leaning against his false leg, he polished the ring. Out on the street he kept polishing it against the sleeve of his suit coat, and with his Homburg tilted over one eye, the cigar clenched in his teeth, kept lifting it to lamplight, to store-front light, to starlight to see it glisten and sparkle.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> In the dark, on the empty street, whistling, he twirled his cane, even if his leg did bother him. Whistling in the dark he even did a couple of fancy dance turns, twirling the cane.
>
> His head was as big as all Chicago.[93]

Don's public appearances become big performances during his campaign for public office. To enhance his image:

> Don came late on purpose and stood, by previous arrangement at the back of the hall accepting the praise of suckholes and wellwishers.[94]

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[92]Motley, We Fished All Night, p. 169.

[93]Ibid., pp. 309-10.

[94]Ibid., pp. 424-25.

Then, when it was his turn to speak:

> Don, smiling, gesturing with his upraised cane moved down the center aisle from the back of the hall. Everybody applauded, some of the people standing and clapping, patting him on the back as he moved through the throng toward the stage.[95]

Thus, Don acquires the professional capacity to be everybody's friend and he becomes a bigger man by appearing to serve others while serving himself.

There are moments, however, when Don is alone with his conscience. He tries to convince himself that, once he is elected, his facade will change and that the behavior pattern he has adopted to advance his political career justifies the end. He tells himself that:

> He had to play along with them until he was in office . . . . I got a terrific break - one in a million . . . . I've been cheated all my life. I'm not going to be cheated again. It's kind of an easy and a swell game I got into. It's easy to do when you believe in something. When I'm in office . . .[96]

Don's gestures, his sureness of speech, his manner of dress, and the way he emphasizes his leg limp, suggests confidence, but that is not what he really feels.

Actually, he knows that:

> Politics is the filthiest, friggiest business in the world. They use you as a whore. You have to have to have six faces in this game. Promise a lot and give nothing.[97]

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[95] Ibid., p. 425.

[96] Ibid., p. 369.

[97] Ibid., p. 426.

But it offers him what he wants: prestige, power, and money. In order to succeed, one has to seize every available opportunity. The more powerful you are, the less vulnerable you are. Don's excuses for his actions are:

> Life played a dirty trick on me. Life made me a Pole and put me in the slums and gave me a prostitute for a mother. And I know what I want.[98]

Life is short, time is fleeting, and one, should make the most of the moment.

Motley treats the carpe diem theme differently in Let No Man Write My Epitaph and Let Noon Be Fair. Instead of emphasizing the theme in relation to man's inner conflict, he capitalizes on the settings of the stories.

> North Clark Street is a hustler, hard eyed, little mustache preened. He's got to have what you have or he won't sleep tonight.
>
> He's got connections. Whore you want? Cheap Whore? Fancy, high class call girl? Drugs you want? Your own sex you want? Anything you want.
>
> He's got connections.[99]

Motley depicts a world of easy money, drunkardness, dope addiction, and sex, where all the "pleasures" of life exist. The world owes its inhabitants a living, and they do not give a damn from whom they collect.

When Americans, lusting for pleasure and excitement, come in battalion strength to Las Casas, they bring with them alcoholism, adultery, homosexuality, drug addiction, and murderous gossip. The inhabitants and the tourists engage

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[98]Ibid., pp. 467-68.

[99]Motley, Let No Man Write My Epitaph, p. 181.

in a wide assortment of immoral activities as each seeks to satisfy his own appetite. Each week, the English-language newspaper published in Mexico City, carries several pages of alluring advertisements and events in Las Casas.

PARTIES AGAIN:

> The open season isn't on as yet but parties are being given all over town anyway . . . The Toledanos will fete Majorie (Senora Hudson) this Thursday night with forty or more friends to bid "adios" to her. She'll go to New York there to arrange a gallery showing of her husband's paintings following his shows in San Francisco, Dallas, Chicago and Mexico . . . Jerry Standley is guesting the James Rodgerses from Los Angeles for too months . . . Seen on the veranda of Hotel Tropical were the newlyweds Donald and Joan Sherman from Seattle who are ending their honeymoon here after first having tasted the night life of Acapulco. They say they like it here much better . . . Agatha Henderson will entertain her bridge club with a typical Mexican luncheon Wednesday with Mariachis and all the trimmings. Included in the guest list are Mrs. Harold Jones, Mrs. Robert Nichols and . . .[100]

Of the four pages of The News in Las Casas at least three are taken up by advertisements of hotels, restaurants, extravagant promises and prices, American food, and dress shops. Such extravagant lures bring people from various parts of the world to Las Casas. For the adventurous pleasure seeker, Las Casas is certainly a picturesque stopover.

By employing the carpe diem theme, Motley sets forth two basic ideas for the readers' consideration. One idea, based on Nick's and Don's characterizations, is that minority groups, when faced with insurmountable social and psychological

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[100]Motley, Let Noon Be Fair, p. 311.

problems, often adopt a carpe diem attitude toward life and use it as a protective shield. The adopted attitude frustrates the individual because he consciously accepts the idea, but subconsciously rejects it.

The second idea is based on blighted urban environments. Cities such as Chicago and Las Casas induce the carpe diem attitude and hinder acceptable social and psychological adjustments. Again society is the culprit. By creating an unwholesome environment, society fosters disillusionment and forces the child into the adult world before he is fully capable of determining the course of his destiny.

Motley's writings present a naturalistic view of life. His readers need not accept this view, but they should at least recognize the fact that it provokes thought. His novels thus, are the product of a compassionate man concerned with the plight of American youth living in urban environments. The conclusions that his readers draw are their own, but Motley does advance some sociological lessons for them to ponder.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Willard Motley attempted to encompass all the myriad frustrations, disillusionments, alienations, and defeats which he saw young Americans subjected to during a particularly complex moment in history. His novels have been catagorized as naturalistic and sociological--naturalistic because they are based on a deterministic concept of human behavior and sociological because they are commentaries on the calloused society in which he lived.

Motley chose the naturalistic tradition to advance his sociological study of heredity and environment. He was in accord with the naturalists who believed that the dictates of conventional society forced man to repress his nature; that the need to express and to satisfy his nature pushed man toward violating social codes and conventions; that life as a search for beauty, a guest for power, and effort to express creativity, became a struggle for money, position, and sexual satisfaction. In the guest and the struggle the strongest always won; the weak were always crushed.

Motley follows the basic premise of Dreiser's writing that there is a conflict between human instincts and social conventions. Just as the stronger man has an advantage over the

weaker, organized groups have the advantage over the individual. They punish those who oppose their dictations or seem to threaten their organization. Only those individuals who are strong enough to gain control over the levers of power have a good chance of resisting social pressure. In a capitalistic society the struggle for power and gratification is expressed in the struggle for money.[101]

The naturalist chose to record the inner facts of the period in which he wrote. In order to do that, he had to possess a knowledge of human psychology, show the machinery of his intellectual and sensory manifestations under the influence of heredity and environment, and then exhibit man living in social conditions, produced by himself, which he modified daily and as the result of which he was undergoing constant transformation.[102]Finally, to advance his thesis, the naturalist had to mount details in order to shock the reader into a complete awareness of the hideousness, the sordidness, and repugnance of this human environment.

Motley, following the naturalist technique, observes and reports the brutal hard facts regardless of their effect upon certain sensibilities. In that regard, he does more than that; he focuses attention on the warped personalities in their relationship to society.[103]

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[101]Robert Spiller, et.al., "Toward Naturalism in Fiction," Literary History of the United States, Vol. II (New York: The McMillan Company, 1948), pp. 1202-03.

[102]Vernon Parrington, "Naturalism in American Fiction," Main Currents in American Thought (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927),pp. 323-27.

[103]Hughes, Op. cit., pp. 191-92.

Naturalistic novels of the forties and fifties either painted a dark picture in which human happiness was largely a matter of chance or sort for hope in specifically human values.[104] Motley, again following the naturalistic technique, chooses to paint a dark picture to make vigorous and moving social protest. He follows the trend of the novelists of the period who do not depict the troubled adolescent as the innocent victim of an unsympathetic home environment, who revolts when pushed to the limits of endurance. Adolescent rebellion is pictured as the result of a complex interplay of characters, the fault lying as much with the adolescent as with the family and the environment.[105]

Each of Motley's novels contains certain sociological pronouncements that his readers can ascertain. His themes reveal that rebellion and juvenile delinquency are caused by personality clashes, usually between the father or the mother; and special problems such as financial trouble, broken homes, and parental standards of living which conflict with those sought by the youth. Rebellion against family status frequently causes an adolescent to seek his happiness elsewhere.

In his attempt to find happiness the adolescent turns to his social environment. Often that environment is an unwholesome one and it corrupts the individual. It impells the adolescent, who suffers from lack of understanding, to win power and esteem by illegal means, often peddling drugs,

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[104]Withan, Op. cit., p. 266.

[105]Ibid., p. 74.

prostituting, pandering, and armed violence. Once the adolescent is exposed to corruption, his attitudes toward life become distorted. He seeks happiness by engaging in rackets, gang warfare, alcohol, drugs, and sex. Established moral institutions are considered nuisances. Motley indicts the situation because man does nothing to correct the grotesque faults of a society that squanders its assets and hoards its liabilities.[106]

While Motley excels in creating detailed descriptions, his most obvious fault seems always to be basically one of characterization.[107] In his eagerness to present his case, Motley creates too many less interesting characters that take up better than half of his books, and yet do almost nothing. New characters are introduced with no depth or insight; therefore, it is difficult to keep in mind the threads and fortunes of all the characters along with the narrative. Even his major characters spend their lives making gestures of great joy; their lives, they claim, are full of zest. Yet, all of them are woefully bored. Nowhere in all of Motley's work is there either zest or joy.[108]

There are other obvious imperfections in Motley's novels. His themes lend themselves to sentimental treatment, and Motley does not always resist the temptation. According to

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[106]Ibid., 247.

[107]Henry Rage, "Books of the Week," The Commonweal, XLVI (July 25, 1947), 359.

[108]Nelson Algren, "The Trouble at Gingo Gulch," Bookweek, III (March 6, 1966), 15.

Lee, Motley is not a subtle writer. "Indeed, he writes like a whole glee club of sob sisters . . . ."[109] Instead of disappearing out of sight behind his characters, Motley is conspicuously present, and he gets in the reader's way.[110] Moreover, the plots of Motley's novels are obviously contrived, and nearly makes it impossible to find the required amount of plausibility.[111]

Present-day youth are living in a difficult era - "an age of anxiety." Motley's perception warns of that; therefore, he attempts to tell America that her social institutions have to change in order to assure adequate social and psychological development. Wholesome institutions would develop personal motivation and produce satisfaction in fulfilling appropriate social roles. Wholesome institutions also provide for competition and cooperation, the opportunity to assert oneself without paralyzing fears and gain satisfaction from helping others. America needs a toleration for frustration and anxiety - for no individual's life is without painful stress and at times seemingly insurmountable obstacles. America needs to be flexible enough to permit change, for change is inevitable. America also needs a realistic knowledge of man's capabilities and limitations, his predominant needs, his fears, and his sources of conflict. For without a reasonable degree of

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[109]Lee, Op. cit., p. 247.

[110]Granville Hicks, "Art and Reality," Saturday Review of Literature, XLI (August 9, 1958), 11.

[111]Hughes, Op. cit., p. 190.

such knowledge, America is like a man trying to put together a jigsaw puzzle when several of the most important parts are missing.[112]

There will be those who will question whether Motley has fully stated his case-the psychological problems arising out of the economic and social conflicts which face the world. They will make it the subject of disputes, denunciations, choruses of praise, and other diversities of opinion. However, Motley has clearly established his own defense through his spokesman, Tom Van Pelt:

> The writer is involved in life. The artist, the realistic, writer is involved as it is, involved with poverty, ugliness, corruption, evil, and his envolvement tries to alleviate the causes, tries to change, or at least to point out. He explores the ugly, the miserable, the humble, to show the beauty and humanity in it. He is involved with wanting man to stand erect. He repeats and repeats, 'Here is life. Here is ugliness. It need not be so.' And he wants first of all to equip himself with understanding and sympathy.[113]

Motley has an artistic principle which assumes the artist is a person who belongs to the world and his art is for mankind.[114]

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[112]Mussen, Op. cit., pp. 542-43.

[113]Motley, Let Noon Be Fair, p. 414.

[114]Hughes, Op. cit., p. 191.

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